

# **Funding assistance available to beginning farmers for poultry mortality management from Kent Conservation District partnership with DNREC, Department of Agriculture**

**DOVER** – Approximately \$1 million in conservation funding assistance is now available to help beginning farmers in Kent County address poultry mortality management on their farming operation. The funding – for implementing water quality best management practices including composters and mortality freezers to address routine mortality – comes through a program led by the Kent Conservation District in cooperation with the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC), the Department of Agriculture (DDA), and the USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS).

Proper poultry mortality management is critical to prevent leaching of nutrients, spreading of disease, and attracting vermin. The beginning farmer poultry mortality management project administrated by the USDA's NRCS will improve water quality, biosecurity, and also will help Delaware meet the Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for nutrients in the county's waterways.

Financial assistance in Kent County is made available recognizing that beginning farmers face significant startup costs, and that there is a backlog of applicants awaiting approval through financial assistance programs for composters,

mortality freezers, poultry manure structures, and heavy-use area protection pads.

To qualify, beginning farmers must meet the [eligibility requirements of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program \(EQIP\)](#). Interested beginning farmers are encouraged to visit the Kent Conservation District office at 800 Bay Road, Suite 2, Dover, DE 19901 to sign up for the program. The district accepts applications year round, but the next application deadline is June 15. All applications are batched monthly and expedited through the contract process in order to implement water quality BMPs in a timely manner.

Funding is through a Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) project led by the Kent Conservation District, DNREC's Division of Watershed Stewardship and Watershed Assessment and Management Section, the DDA's Nutrient Management Program, and the Delmarva Poultry Industry. In addition, Farm Freezers LLC and Greener Solutions LLC are offering a \$100 rebate per freezer unit purchased through the program, along with a collection fee rebate of \$100 per flock for one year after installation.

For more information, please contact Timothy Riley, district coordinator, Kent Conservation District at 302-741-2600, ext. 3, or visit [www.kentcd.org](http://www.kentcd.org).

**Contact:** Joanna Wilson, DNREC Public Affairs, 302-739-9902

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